Terrorist Incidents Stir Miami Cubans

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Reuters

MIAMI, Fla.—A rash of bombing incidents and the emergence of a new, secret anti-Castro terrorist organization here is bringing fear and political dissent to the normally quiet Cuban exile community in Miami.

The trouble came to a head when a converted B-25 bomber laden with 5000 Havana-bound packages of food, clothing and medicine was blown up at Miami International Airport.

Later, an organization calling itself "Cuban Power" claimed credit for the incident as well as for three bombings in Cuba itself and an explosion in a New York Post Office.

In a statement headed "War Communique Number One" and signed only "Ernesto," the group warned foreign governments that any of its aircraft carrying goods to Cuba in the future "will explode in the air."

Exiles at first shrugged off the group, claiming it was run by a few fanatics. Now, they are not so sure.

A week after the airport bombing, three businesses connected with Cubans were blown up and several more were threatened with attack if they continued to send parcels to Cuba.

The bombings marked the beginning of large-scale terrorist activities in the City, but sheriff's office bomb expert Tom Brodie said the situation has "been building up for some time."

Since Jan. 1 seven bombs were set off, but Brodie dated his file on terrorism back to the early fall, 1967, when a series of "tear gas incidents" hit the headlines.

Several persons were injured in a stampede Nov. 21 when a package of "white powder" was dropped on the dance floor of a Cuban party at a local hotel. Ten persons were taken to a hospital.

The same powder, which floats like gas and causes irritation to the face, was thrown into another crowd Dec. 2 at a restaurant.

A third powder thrower sent 11 persons to a hospital Dec. 16.

Lt. Havard Swilley, a Miami intelligence investigator, believes the terrorists feel exiles are forgetting those still in Cuba.

"They think exiles should not have fun or enjoy themselves as long as their people are in prison in Cuba," Swilley says.